

## **CDC ENCOURAGES EDUCATORS TO REFER PARENTS, YOUTH TO VERB™ RESOURCES ABOUT POSITIVE PHYSICAL ACTIVITIES**

The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services' Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) is encouraging youth educators to support a recently unveiled program aimed at increasing physical activity among children.

The campaign, already gaining awareness across the United States, is called "VERB.™ It's what you do."

"We need the support of America's educators to tackle this epidemic of sedentary behavior among children," says Dr. Jim Marks, M.D., M.P.H., director of the National Center for Chronic Disease Prevention and Health Promotion at CDC. "The VERB campaign is a proactive approach to changing lifestyle behaviors and increasing physical activity among children. America needs this campaign in order to motivate children and their parents to embrace positive physical activity as a part of life that should be enjoyed every day."

Importantly, organizers of the VERB campaign are reaching out to educators, encouraging urging them to speak with parents and youth about VERB resources and VERB recommendations relating to physical activities for children between the ages of 9 and 13.

In particular, educators are encouraged to suggest that children between the ages of 9 and 13 (also known as tweens) visit [www.VERBnow.com](http://www.VERBnow.com) and that mothers, fathers, and guardians visit [www.VERBparents.com](http://www.VERBparents.com). The website for tweens offers many interactive features that provide ideas, and it encourages children to partake in 60 minutes

of moderate-to-vigorous physical activity per day and offers parents practical suggestions on new ways to get their children more active. VERBnow.com is also an outlet for a grant program that will help children fund their plans for physical activity.

The CDC is also developing brochures, customized for parents and guardians, that offer practical recommendations on how to improve children's habits with regard to positive activities. VERB also addresses lifestyle issues by offering guidelines on reducing time spent in sedentary behavior, such as playing video games and watching television.

To obtain brochures, write to VERB at 111 E. Wacker Drive, 18<sup>th</sup> floor, Chicago, Illinois, 60601. The brochure is also downloadable at VERBparents.com.

“We need educators to help VERB get the message out to children and their parents that physical activity is cool, fun, and enjoyable,” says Dr. Marks. “We hope educators will play a key role in promoting and sustaining the VERB movement.”

### **How to Learn More**

The integrated “VERB.™ It’s what you do.” campaign uses advertising, marketing, events, and partnership activities to ensure that campaign messages reach children whenever they are looking for something positive to do. Through multicultural media partnerships, the campaign is designed to reach children in all socioeconomic and ethnic backgrounds – including specific outreach for African Americans, Asian Americans/Pacific Islanders, Native Americans, and Hispanics/Latinos.

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For more information about the campaign see [www.cdc.gov/youthcampaign](http://www.cdc.gov/youthcampaign)  
Parent website [www.VERBparents.com](http://www.VERBparents.com)

## **Sidebar Copy**

### **Strategies for Educators to Support VERB and Promote Physical Activity**

In addition to providing physical education classes, educators and schools can promote physical activity in several other ways:

- Promote collaboration between physical education and classroom teachers. For example, physical education teachers might provide ideas for “fitness breaks” to classroom teachers, in which 5-minute aerobic activities could be used to break up the school day.
- Provide extracurricular physical activity programs. Interested teachers and parents might be encouraged to establish developmentally appropriate clubs and/or intramural activities of a competitive and noncompetitive nature. Walking clubs, in-line skating, jumping rope, water aerobics, and intramural swim teams are a few examples.
- Coordinate physical activities with community agencies. Schools might allow use of school facilities by community agencies that sponsor physical activity programs, facilitate training programs for volunteer youth coaches, invite community groups to an “activity fair” for students in the school gymnasium, or provide a listing of community physical activity resources to students.
- Encourage and enable parental involvement in physical activity. The level of parental activity is very important in promoting activity among children. Schools can help encourage activity in parents by sending home-activity homework that parents and children do together, recruiting parents as volunteers for physical education classes, and sponsoring parent-child activity programs at school.

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